



**COUNTY OF PLACER
FISH & GAME COMMISSION**

Ed King
Deputy Agricultural Commissioner
County Contact

FISH & GAME COMMISSION MEMBERS

DISTRICT 1 Don Gould	DISTRICT 2 Mark Fowler
DISTRICT 3 Gregg McKenzie	DISTRICT 4 Gary Flanagan
DISTRICT 5 Kari Freidig	DISTRICT 5 Marc Wyatt
DISTRICT 5 Mickey Daniels	

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**PLACER COUNTY
FISH & GAME COMMISSION
MINUTES**

TIME/DATE: 6:00 P.M. WEDNESDAY, June 24, 2015

LOCATION: PLACER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING ROOM
Community Development Resource Agency, DeWitt Center, Auburn
3091 County Center Drive (corner of Bell Road and Richardson
Drive)

The Placer County Fish & Game Commission is committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities are provided the resources to participate fully in its public meetings. If you are hearing impaired, we have listening devices available. If you require additional disability-related modifications or accommodations, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the Recording Secretary at (530) 889-7372. If requested, the agenda shall be provided in appropriate alternative formats to persons with disabilities. All requests must be received at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting for which you are requesting accommodation. Requests received after such time will be accommodated only if time permits.

I. CALL TO ORDER – Gregg McKenzie, Chair

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Daniels, Gould, Wyatt, Fowler, Flanagan, Freidig, McKenzie

Absent: N/A

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA for June 24, 2015 and APPROVAL OF MINUTES for May 27, 2015

Agenda: Freidig/Flanagan/MPUV

Minutes: Fowler/Wyatt/MPUV

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Individuals may address the Commission on items under the jurisdiction of the Fish & Game Commission not included on this agenda for no longer than five (5) minutes. ***No action can be taken on items addressed under Public Comment***

None

V. FINANCIAL REPORT – Ed King

Expenditures through May 31, for FY 14/15 total \$8,618.69 including \$1,200.00 in commissioner's fees, \$1,182.53 in mileage reimbursement, and \$5,000.00 in grant awards. Budgeted expenditures for the remainder of the fiscal year total \$2,367.31.

Revenues through May 31, total \$2,832.57, including \$1,704.65 in fines, \$1,021.81 in penalty assessments and \$106.11 in interest. \$546.31 in fines and \$325.90 in penalty assessments were deposited into the Fish & Game Fund in May.

In comparison, total fine, penalty assessment and interest revenues in FY 13/14 were \$729.76.

VI. AGENCY REPORTS

A. Commission Updates

Gould reported on the Placer County Ag Tour, which was June 23. Cal Fire helped demonstrate a fire break process, called "shaded firebreaks," which will slow down the spread of fire and make it easier to drop extinguishing chemicals. The Natural Resources Conservation Service can provide cost shares for property owners to remove lower tree limbs and small trees, run them through a masticator, and spread the mulch on the property. Gould has information for anyone who is interested.

Flanagan also reported that on the Ag Tour, they visited a couple of sites mitigated from wildfires. He noted that replanting was mixed instead of a single species, including sequoias, sugar pines, and ponderosa. Flanagan reported that they went to the American Fire site as well, and that Supervisors Montgomery and Weygandt attended the tour. Many others involved in the community attended.

Gould also mentioned the Nevada County Ag Tour, sponsored by NID. Gould observed that the Parker Dam project was originally considered in 1927 and reevaluated periodically since

Freidig mentioned an article in today's Auburn Journal about a bear on Robie Point attacking a pet goat, and that CDFW had issued a depredation permit.

B. State Wildlife Conservation Board Subcommittee – Gregg McKenzie

At the next meeting, June 30, 2015, they'll review the California Stream Flow Enhancement program, approved by voters in 2014. \$40 million will be available the first year for all types of shoreline restoration and meadow habitat. They will begin to review grants once guidelines are set.

C. State Fish & Game Commission Subcommittee – Mark Fowler

Discovery of whirling disease has forced quarantine of Hot Creek, Mt. Shasta, and Darrah Springs hatcheries; over 3 million trout are affected. It's caused by a protozoa and is not transmissible to humans. Stress and the low flow of water might be to blame for the spread of the disease.

Restrictions on white sturgeon fishing may be implemented as anglers are not returning their fishing cards when the season's done, which is used to track populations and determine future harvest limits. If they don't get data, they may have to underestimate the population in order to protect it.

CDFW is sending out a new game take survey to hunters.

Fisheries restoration grant applications are being reviewed; they need to be received by July 24th.

CDFW is defining conditions for its emergency fishery closure process, looking at temperature, dissolved oxygen, water levels, etc.

D. California Department of Fish & Wildlife - Lt. John Lawson

Lt. Lawson was not available and Warden Mark Michilizzi spoke on his behalf. He first came to the district in December, 2014, but hasn't been to any meetings since.

McKenzie asked if the warden had any information on the Robie Point bear. Michilizzi stated that, according to an email he received the property owner had not requested a depredation permit by midday.

Michilizzi stated that there have been several local bear incidents because of food being left out. A sow bear with a couple of cubs were seen at a Lincoln Way dumpster that had been overflowing with garbage. A crowd of people stood around to watch; a foolish, dangerous action.

Freidig asked how CDFW makes sure that the bear for which a depredation permit is issued is the same one that's killed. Michilizzi said that that was a good question; there is an effort to make sure, especially in light of people's concern about bear populations, but there is a chance you could get the wrong bear. Incidents are handled differently; a property damage attack will be treated differently than an attack on a human, but it's largely up to the property owner to decide. Michilizzi stated that even property damage reports vary; there's a difference between a bear breaking into your coop and attacking your chickens and a bear that walks into an open front door and raids the pantry. Michilizzi stated that many bear incidents are avoidable if people who live in bear country take the time to educate themselves.

Michilizzi praised the Placer County wildlife specialists for their hard work and handling of the complicated and controversial bear issues.

Michilizzi restated CDFW's policy on suction dredging; it's still illegal in California, so wardens still collecting evidence. The court cases that might change the law are being held up, so they're still enforcing the ban. Michilizzi pointed out that some placer mining is still legal; some violator calls they receive are for people mining legally.

Michilizzi stated that archery season for deer and bear is a month and a half away, and that his office is preparing for dealing with problem areas, public safety, poaching and trespassing.

Michilizzi stated that sturgeon is heavily poached because caviar is valuable. Many but not all violators are caught.

Michilizzi stated that he had no information on hatcheries. He stated that he thought the hunter surveys are a great idea, and mentioned that his wife and son were surveyed last year.

Wyatt asked if it is mandatory to turn in your deer tag this year, whether or not you fill it. Michilizzi said that's what he understands, although he hasn't seen it in the regulations yet; he's certain that it will be. He stated that it's important information for wildlife management.

Flanagan asked if Michilizzi had any statistics for citations issued. Michilizzi said that Lt. Lawson has that information, but he knows offhand of several citations and arrests for public safety and vehicle code violations, as well as some for fishing violations. He knows of at least one suction dredging case in Nevada County.

A member of the audience asked if it was legal for people to make little dams in the streambed to mine. Michilizzi stated that the law is that people can't alter the stream substantially, which is open to interpretation, but anything done by hand is probably OK; anything done using a tractor is probably not. A violation would be obvious.

E. Nevada Irrigation District & Placer County Water Agency Reports

JUNE PCWA Report – Ben Ransom

French Meadows is at 5,195' (57,500 ac-ft of storage)

Hell Hole is at 4,523' (100,500 ac-ft of storage)

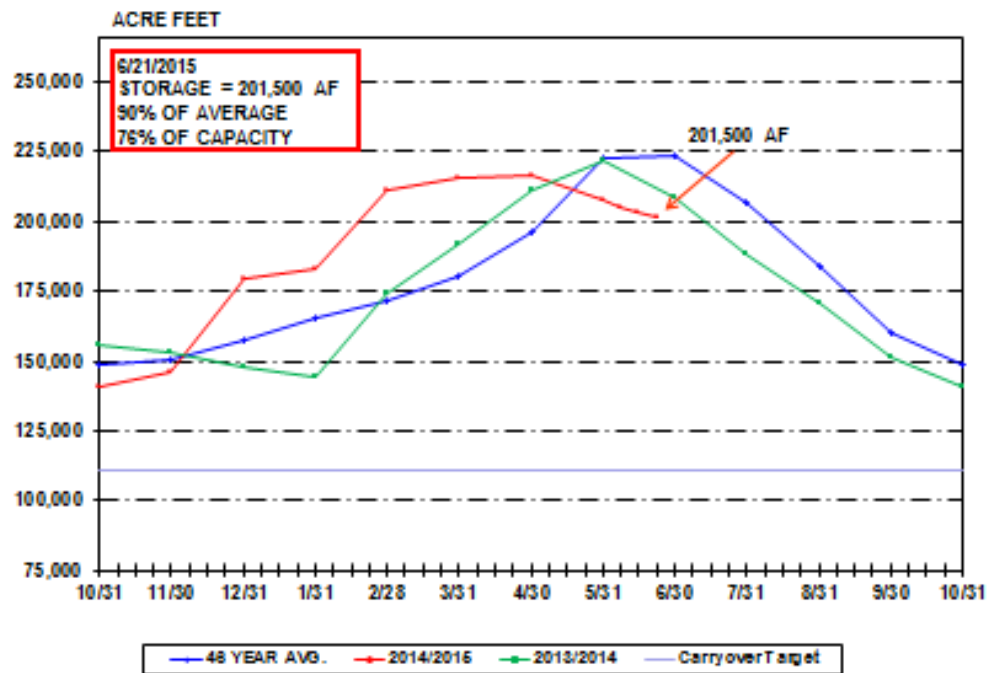
Tuesdays and Fridays have been added to June recreational whitewater boating releases downstream of Oxbow Powerhouse, releases will be made Tuesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday through Labor Day weekend.

Folsom Reservoir is currently at 413' (472,000 ac-ft of storage) and is projected to be below 400' by early July and at 343' (120,000 ac-ft) by the end of September (lower than 1977).

JUNE NID Report – Sue Sindt

District Storage as of 6/21/15 = 201,500 AF; 90% of average for this date.

DISTRICT'S RESERVOIR STORAGE (TAF)



NON-ACTION ITEMS

VII. 2014 Fish & Game Commission Grant Reports

A. E.V. Cain S.T.E.M. Charter Middle School, Native Plant Garden

Gary Wells, Science Teacher and Cain Conservation Club Advisor

Wells noticed a lot of wild things on the campus grounds, such as deer, fox and hardy native plants, and thought it would be fun to start something with the kids.

The Cain Conservation Club's mission is to help improve the natural environment at the school and local area while learning about, exploring, and enjoying the outdoors. Wells' presentation included photos over four years of the club's experiences.

Wells showed photos of the students picking up trash and clearing the area around the native plants. They learned about native plants and wildlife. They removed the non-native Japanese honeysuckle and Himalayan blackberry.

They went on a field trip to Dan Macon's farm, where they learned about ecology related to livestock grazing and watched a dog-herding demonstration. They also went on a field trip to Hidden Falls.

The kids made bee nest boxes and a bluebird box, and set them on the campus. They were able to get a National Wildlife Federation Schoolyard Habitat certification in 2013.

A parent of a student told Wells about the Commission's grant program, and he decided to create a native pollinator habitat. With the money, they were able to purchase tools, hoses, drip irrigation equipment and mulch. All plants were from local nurseries; they were able to plant over 40 native plants of over 17 different species.

Gould mentioned that Del Oro High School has a greenhouse and a good botany program for its students. He asked whether Wells' program were a club or a class. Wells said that it's a club right now, but he will be offering a class next year.

Gould asked where Wells got seeds. Wells replied that they were donated by Matt Dunnahoe.

B. Protect American River Canyons, Sundial Mosaic Animal Mural

Eric Peach, Conservation Chairman

Twelve Bridges Elementary in Lincoln has a sundial with some mosaics already installed. PARC decided to work with the school's Bird Club to create clay bird tiles to add to the sundial. They plan to add the completed bird tiles in the fall. All types of local birds were created; over 70 bird tiles will be added to the sundial. The grant money was used for clay, glazes, and art supplies. The Bird Club teaches kids all about birds: how to recognize them, hear their calls, understand their habitats, and what kinds of foods they eat. The club also installed bird feeders to attract birds to the campus. Peach would like to return in the fall to present photos of the finished artwork when it's installed.

Freidig stated that she would like to go in person to see the finished artwork.

Peach also stated that he would like to work on transforming the rest of the campus to help kids learn about wildlife and art.

C. Save Auburn Ravine Salmon and Steelhead, PASCO Spark Water Testing Kits/Water Quality Monitoring

Jack Sanchez, President

Some grant money was used to pay bills, fix their website, and for general housekeeping, but much of it was used for their Citizen Science outreach program to monitor the presence of fish in Auburn Ravine. Jim Haufler coordinated the project and presented to the Commission.

The People

- 19 adult Citizen Scientists
- 4 youth Citizen Scientists
- 1 teacher and 32 Students at Ophir School
- 1 Realtor helping us get mailing addresses
- 225 observations
- 40 minutes per observation average
- 150+ hours of on-stream observation time
- Most salmon observations were done on Sundays between Noon and 2PM to minimize duplications).
- 14 locations were used for observations. 5 public, 9 private.

Ophir School Program

- Environmental Stewardship
- Led by Kathy Lowry for 7 years.
- 8th year begins this fall led by Randy Nemeth.
- 32 students this year.
- Over 200 students in 7 years.
- Salmon in the Classroom
- Rear up to 30 Chinook salmon per year.
- Release them at Discovery Park.
- Field Trips to Auburn Ravine
- Water tests.
- Identification of indicator species (Mayflies, Stoneflies, etc.)

The Salmon

- 60 adult Chinook salmon (Approx. the same as CDFW estimate. Includes 5 salmon seen above Hemphill Dam.)
- 2 adult Steelhead seen below Hemphill Dam.
- 1000 baby Chinook salmon seen and photographed below Hemphill Dam
- Zero salmon seen in Fowler Bridge pool. This is the first big pool above Hemphill Dam.

Conclusions

- Attempting observations below the Nelson Lane site is not a good use of Citizen Science resources.
- More observation sites are needed between Nelson Lane and Gold Hill Dam.

- Hemphill Dam blocks about 92% of upstream migration.
- Salmon and Steelhead migrate into Auburn Ravine even in low-water years.

Actions

- Expansion plan begins in July (Recruiting more property owners and volunteers).
- We will kick off the next season in September.
- Get more observations and photos and videos of fry and parr as they move downstream to the Sacramento River, and/or into unscreened diversions.

Gould asked if volunteers would be allowed to transfer fish above Hemphill Dam. Haufler stated that there were people available, but they're still trying to get permits, and there are some issues with rocks and spawning. There is a property owner upstream of Hemphill who will allow them to relocate fish to his stream bank.

Freidig asked about building a fish ladder at Hemphill. Haufler stated that they've been trying for a long time to work with the dam's owner, Nevada Irrigation District, to do something to improve fish passage. A ladder could be built and stream modification could be made, but all parties need to work together. Flanagan mentioned installing entrainment screens. Haufler stated that they plan to document more this coming season to determine if screens should go in earlier. He said that the screen installers were funded and aided by several groups.

VIII. Concerns Regarding Improvement of Fish Passage at Hemphill Dam

Save Auburn Ravine Salmon and Steelhead, Jack Sanchez, President

Sanchez congratulated SARSAS member Robert Hane, Coordinator for the Restoration of the North Ravine, for his C.K. McClatchy Tree Hero award from the Sacramento Tree Foundation.

Sanchez reported that several agencies are willing to work together to improve fish passage over Hemphill Dam, and that Fly Fishing Unlimited is willing to give SARSAS a lot of money.

Steve Hubbard showed a PowerPoint presentation that included excerpts from a Rotary Screw Tap Monitoring of Auburn Ravine that prove salmon and steelhead use the Ravine as smolt and parr. He also showed a letter from CDFW to NID denying NID's application for maintenance at Hemphill because of Fish and Game Code violations. SARSAS asserts that the dam is illegal.

Hubbard said that SARSAS is frustrated by their perceived lack of action from CDFW and NID to resolve fish access problems at Hemphill. Hubbard believes that NID would do nothing about it if left alone. Hubbard reports that they feel that

all CDFW is willing to do is set up meetings which end up resolving nothing. SARSAS wants to get on the Commission's agenda so they can officially request help.

Hubbard stated that SARSAS wants the Commission to apply pressure to the Placer County Board of Supervisors to act. He said that SARSAS has presented to the Commission numerous times, and would like the Commission to take some action. Hubbard stated that every year that passes is another lost opportunity to help the endangered species. SARSAS feels that the Commission could be doing more.

Freidig asked if anything could really be accomplished in the next three months. Hubbard stated that SARSAS hopes to lead a catch and carry rescue operation, can be done with very short notice, and they believe that they can get approval with the support of the Commission.

Freidig asked if it's possible to permanently fix the dam to allow for fish passage instead of taking down the dam. Hubbard replied that removal might end up being the best decision because the dam is old and wearing out.

Freidig asked where exactly is the dam. Hubbard explained that it's two miles upstream from the Lincoln city limits, 200 yards from Virginiatown Rd, and adjacent to Turkey Creek Golf Course. It's located in a portion of land for which developers are seeking annexation to the City of Lincoln.

Wyatt wondered why CDFW isn't pursuing fines or issuing notices of violation. Flanagan pointed out that the letter from CDFW to NID seems open-ended, inviting NID to contact CDFW to discuss resolving the issues; however, he asked at what point, if NID doesn't respond, will CDFW decide to take action.

Warden Michilizzi replied that every situation is different, but that generally, they'll send a letter listing violations and corrective action recommendations. Flanagan pointed out that the letter already says that CDFW has determined that there's a violation, and it asks NID to contact Tina Bartlett to talk about a resolution. Flanagan said he believes that the Commission should act to put pressure on influential parties to get NID to comply.

Freidig agreed and listed several options the Commission could pursue. Freidig asked for input on the best action. Flanagan supports a catch and carry plan for this season because of the need to act quickly, but believes the Commission should aid in making NID act quickly to fix the problem. Freidig asked if a catch and carry plan was realistic within the next three months, and Hubbard confirmed. Hubbard stated that a lot of catch and carry incidents are responses to emergency situations and can be put together rapidly.

Michilizzi asked if anyone had contacted the environmental scientist assigned to see where CDFW is at in the process. Hubbard stated that SARSAS had contacted Jennifer Nguyen a month ago, and also Tina Bartlett, who told them that she had arranged a meeting with NID. SARSAS feels that CDFW is having too many meetings and not acting on NID's violations. SARSAS is in contact with Kevin Schafer of CDFW and Gary Sprague of NOAA, both of whom are willing to assist in a catch and carry plan this year. SARSAS members are angry and frustrated at NID's, CDFW's, and the Commission's perceived lack of action.

Fowler stated that he appreciates SARSAS' frustration and conceded that Rem Scherzinger's presentation in the March meeting showed NID's plans didn't involve any short-term action. Fowler explained that the Commission received 100 pages a week before the meeting. The Commission needs enough advance notice to be able to prepare and make informed decisions, but Fowler stated that he supports putting pressure on people to get something done.

Scott Johnson of SARSAS reminded the Commission that Placer County had already completed the Auburn Ravine/Coon Creek Ecosystem Restoration Plan and determined that something needed to be done years ago.

Gould asked if SARSAS could get a permit to move the fish. SARSAS has been working with their contacts in NOAA and CDFW to try and arrange something; CDFW has the trucks and SARSAS has the manpower.

McKenzie stated that he believed the Commission had a consensus, which was enough to create an action item, and asked if any Commissioners had comments.

Gould stated that he would like to do something to try and make the catch and carry happen.

McKenzie recommended to the Commission to invite Tina Bartlett or another representative of CDFW to present what's being done regarding the issue in the notification letter; he also recommended that the Commission invite NID back to present, even though they may not attend.

Flanagan agreed with McKenzie's recommendation, but added that since the issue is time sensitive, the Commission should invite SARSAS to return and present as an action item after CDFW and NID explain their plans; that way the Commission could make a decision in enough time to act on it.

Wyatt requested that SARSAS come up with a specific plan and a timeline for a short-term solution. SARSAS said that they have a plan, but that CDFW and NOAA need to make decisions and agree before SARSAS can implement a catch and carry.

McKenzie stated that the Commission was in consensus for SARSAS to return in July. King agreed with Wyatt that SARSAS should present a specific plan.

Wyatt recalled that one of NID's issues with a catch and carry was their liability to people on their property. Sanchez replied that SARSAS workers will catch and release away from NID property because they have permission from many private landowners to use their property.

Sanchez expressed concern about getting CDFW to agree with SARSAS' plan because CDFW was worried about fish injury. Sanchez said they should consider the cost to the fish of not doing anything.

Wyatt suggested that the Commission consider writing letters to SARSAS, CDFW and NOAA contacts requesting a response to the proposed catch and carry.

McKenzie asked if next meeting's invitations should go to Tina Bartlett and Patrick Moeszinger at CDFW. King added that Rem Scherzinger should be invited back as well, and someone added that Kevin Schafer of CDFW should be contacted.

Wyatt asked Michilizzi if Lt. Lawson or Erica Manes might be available. Michilizzi stated that he knew Manes was involved, but wasn't sure in what capacity.

McKenzie thanked SARSAS for their presentation, and Sanchez thanked the Commission for letting them blow off steam.

Robert Hane asked to speak to the Commission and discussed specific things that Rem Scherzinger stated at the April 24, 2015 meeting. Scherzinger had stated that Auburn Ravine water was imported water, not state water, and that it belonged to NID, PCWA, or PG&E, unless it was natural flow, and that there hadn't been a natural flow. Sue Sindt stated that that was true. Scherzinger then stated that all water belongs to the state but that the state has licensed the water to NID. Hane then referred to the notification letter from CDFW to NID where it is written that the dam substantially diverts the natural flow of Auburn Ravine Creek into Hemphill Canal. Hane stated that he had hoped NID would be present at tonight's meeting so he could ask them if water that they sold to a customer backflowed into a canal, did they re-sell that water. Hane stated that NID told him that there was no natural water flow into Auburn Ravine; he would like to ask NID where the water is coming from if it's not natural. Hane stated that he is a customer of NID and doesn't want them to go out of business; he just wants habitat for fish in North Ravine.

Hane thanked Commissioner Gould for donating ten redwoods.

ACTION ITEMS

IX. Fiscal Year 2015-16 Commission Officer Nominations

McKenzie stated that he couldn't run again for the Chair position, as he is serving as chair on another board. He recommended that the Commission accept the Vice Chair as the new Chair, and elect a new Vice Chair, who will eventually become Chair; therefore, McKenzie nominated Wyatt as new Chair. Flanagan seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved. Daniels nominated Freidig for Vice Chair, Fowler seconded, and Gould offered a third. The motion was unanimously approved.

X. Next Meeting Date

July 29, 2015 at 6:00 PM. Tentative

Proposed action items for the next meeting included a possible presentation from the PG&E Stewardship Council. Representatives from SARSAS, NID, and CDFW will be invited to attend and present to the Commission. The manager of the new Bass Pro Shop in Rocklin would like to speak about programs they plan to sponsor in the community. McKenzie has been talking with Senator Nielsen's office about having one of the wardens speak about the impacts of marijuana grows to wildlife, in anticipation of a 2016 ballot initiative legalizing the drug for recreational use. Formal elections are scheduled.

XI Adjournment

8:25 PM